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Title: Demand of assitance for the State of Kerala facing severe drought and floods.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Sir, I would like to place before this House some serious issues that the people of Kerala are facing. Since, there is a full-fledged discussion, I would like to say a few words on these issues.

There was a severe drought last year in Kerala. The State has lost hundreds of acres of land and crores and crores of rupees. Not only that, you see, there was severe flood situation also and again not only the paddy cultivation was lost but the cash crop cultivation was also lost to a very great extent. It has also come in the newspapers that it has severely affected the State of Kerala and hundreds of farmers have committed suicide as a result of this grave situation.

Sir, it is very sad to say that Kerala is not included in the list of severely drought affected areas. I would also like to place before this House a few lines on these issues. Out of 1,570 revenue villages, 960 villages have been severely affected and 556 villages are partially affected by drought. About thousand houses are fully damaged and about two thousand houses are partially damaged. Around 50,638 hectares of paddy field has been completely lost. The total loss in agricultural sector comes to about Rs.1,43,146 crore. In addition to this, there was a severe damage to the cash crops in almost all the districts. The drought and floods created huge loss of revenue and human lives. In the agricultural sector, this has contributed to worsening of the situation, especially the suicide by hundreds of farmers and agricultural workers.

The production in different fields, let me say, has declined to a large extent. In the case of paddy, there is a very poor yield. The production declined from 30 per cent to 100 per cent. In the case of arecanut, it has declined from 20 per cent to 30 per cent. The production in pepper has declined from 25 per cent to 80 per cent and production in banana has declined from 25 per cent to 70 per cent. The cardamom crop, especially in Waynad and Idukki districts, has declined from 20 per cent to 60 per cent. The production in coffee has declined to 65 per cent. There has been a decline in all other crops.

Of course, the hon. Agriculture Minister has made it clear that there was a lapse on the part of the State Government. But forgetting these technicalities and giving due importance to the issues which the people of Kerala area facing, the Government has to take adequate and urgent steps. If the Government of India does not take adequate and urgent steps and if immediate assistance is not provided, no doubt the people of Kerala, especially in the agricultural sector, will be in a disastrous position. So, I would like to place these issues before the Government and request it to take them seriously.